



Cheltenham Community Centre Early Learning Childcare

E8. Interactions with Children

1. Policy

- 1.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability.
- 1.2 Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security. Positive interactions between educators/adults and children can empower children to feel valued, competent and capable.
- 1.3 Actively engaging in children's learning and decision-making during play, daily routines and ongoing activities can stimulate children's thinking, enrich their learning and encourage them to explore and manage their feelings and behaviour.
- 1.4 This policy is aimed at ensuring that:
 - respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child, and
 - all children attending CCC Children's Services are supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
- 1.5 Cheltenham Community Centre (CCC) Children's Services is committed to:
 - Maintaining the dignity and rights of each child at the service
 - Encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions, and to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
 - Considering the health, safety and wellbeing of each child, and providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which they can develop and learn
 - Maintaining a duty of care (refer to Definitions) towards all children at the service
 - Considering the diversity of individual children at the service, including family/cultural values and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child
 - Building collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children, and
 - Encouraging positive, respectful and warm relationships between children and educators/staff at CCC.
- 1.6 This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Early Childhood Educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled at CCC.
- 1.7 In order to assess whether the values and purposes of this policy have been achieved, we will
 - Welcome feedback from everyone affected by this policy regarding its effectiveness
 - Monitor the implementations, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
 - Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
 - Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required

- Notify parents/guardians as least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

2. Procedure

- 2.1 All educators will be aware of CCC's expectations in regard to our policy of Interactions with Children and strive to implement its values and standards.
- 2.2 Staff interactions with children:
- are on a one to one and group basis
 - demonstrate respect for the child and encourage respect for others and the environment
 - involve listening when children talk about their feelings or frustrations.
- 2.3 Children are adequately supervised and educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times. Supervision requires the staff member to be actively involved with children and have knowledge of what each child is doing at any given time of the day. Through such supervision the Early Childhood Educator gets to know each child and develops essential understandings about them within the social setting.
- 2.4 Expectations are matched to the limits of the young child's abilities to wait, to share, to appropriately express feelings and to cope with tiredness and disappointment.
- 2.5 All children are:
- given positive guidance and encouragement towards development of acceptable behaviour
 - guided with clear, consistent, fair limits for behaviour
 - acknowledged when they exhibit positive behaviour
 - supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts
 - given opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with Early Childhood Educators
 - encouraged and supported towards self-reliance and the development of positive self-esteem
 - given the opportunity to freely choose activities, solve problems, and have access to learning experiences
 - encouraged to express themselves and their opinions, and
 - encouraged to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
- 2.6 Education and care programs:
- are provided in a way which maintains the dignity and rights of each child
 - have regard for each individual child's family and cultural values, age, physical and intellectual development and abilities
 - contribute to the development of children with a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, who are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators.
 - Provide safe, secure and hazard-free environment and experiences to the child
 - are appropriate to the developmental abilities of the individual and promote success by balancing meeting children's individual needs with the needs of all other children in the group.
- 2.7 Punishment is inappropriate as a child management technique. No child will be subjected to any form of corporal punishment, immobilisation or any other frightening or threatening technique. Smacking, yelling at, swearing, blaming, insulting, labelling or isolating a child is not acceptable under any circumstance, even with parental consent.

- 2.8 If staff experience difficulty in managing particular behaviours, staff will consult with both the parent of the child and the Early Years Team Leader for support and guidance including training.
- 2.9 Staff will:
- have a sound knowledge of child development in order to successfully apply behaviour guidance techniques
 - be provided with regular opportunities to update their knowledge and skills, and
 - emphasise the importance of supporting families who are experiencing difficulties, through family-friendly practices and linking families into relevant support networks.
- 2.10 Referrals to specialist services are actively pursued and follow up discussions with families and specialist services are undertaken to ensure children and family's needs are being met.
- 2.11 Regular communication will occur between parents and staff to develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental level and individual needs within the context of the home environment.

3. Legislation and standards

- 3.1 Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*
 - *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*
 - *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*
 - *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 (Vic)*
 - *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
 - *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167*
 - *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 73, 74, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)*
 - *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
 - *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children.*
 - *Standard 5.1: Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child*
 - *Standard 5.2: Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive*
- 3.2 The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:
- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
 - Commonwealth Legislation - Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au>

4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Adequate supervision:** Supervision is an integral part of the whole care and education experience. At its most basic level, supervision helps to protect children from hazards or harm that may arise in their daily experiences in play, interactions with others, and daily routines. Adequate supervision means that an adult can respond immediately, including when a child is distressed or is in a hazardous situation. Supervision is constantly observing and relating to individual children and groups of children to contribute to their safety and wellbeing.
- 4.2 **Behaviour guidance:** A means of assisting children to self-manage their behaviour. It differs from traditional 'behaviour management' or 'discipline' which generally implies that an adult is 'managing' children's behaviour or using punishment to control children. Behaviour guidance applies to all forms of behaviour, not just behaviours labelled as 'negative'.

- 4.3 **Behaviour guidance plan:** A plan that documents strategies to assist an educator in guiding a child with diagnosed behavioural difficulties to self-manage his/her behaviour. The plan is developed in consultation with the Early Years Team Leader, educators, parents/guardians and families, and other professional support agencies as applicable.
- 4.4 **Challenging behaviour:** behaviour that can be described as:
- disrupts others or causes disputes between children
 - infringes on the rights of others
 - causes harm or risk to the child, other children, adults or living things
 - is destructive to the environment and/or equipment
 - inhibits the child's learning and relationship with others
 - is inappropriate relative to the child's developmental age and background.
- 4.5 **Duty of care:** The obligation that everyone working in child care, whatever the type of service and/or their role, has to keep children safe. The legal term duty of care refers to this obligation and has major implications for the organisation.
- 4.6 **Inclusion Support Program:** Funded by the Commonwealth Government to promote and maintain high quality, inclusive education and care, for all children, including those with ongoing high support needs, in eligible early childhood education and care settings. This is achieved by increasing the knowledge and skills of educators, and the capacity of education and care services, through providing professional development, advice and access to additional resources as well as inclusion support. Details are available at:
<https://www.education.gov.au/inclusion-support-program-isp>
- 4.7 **Mental health:** In early childhood, a child's mental health is understood as a child's ability to experience, regulate and express emotions; form close and secure interpersonal relationships; and explore the environment and learn – all in the context of family, community and cultural expectations for young children. Infant mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development. <https://beyou.edu.au/>

5. Sources and related policies

5.1 Sources:

- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>
- Child Safe Standards: www.ccyp.vic.gov.au
- Duty of care definition:
https://ww2.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCH_Vol9_No1_March2006.pdf
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics:
<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA:
www.acecqa.gov.au
- Inclusion Support Program (ISP), Australian Government:
<https://www.education.gov.au/inclusion-support-program-isp>
- Kids Matter, an Australian mental health and well-being initiative set in primary schools and early childhood education and care services: <https://beyou.edu.au>
- Supervision:
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotessupe rv.pdf>
- United nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: www.unicef.org
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:

5.2 Services policies:

- Code of conduct
- Behaviour guidance
- Workplace health and safety
- Parent complaint procedure
- Confidentiality policy and guidelines
- Inclusion and Equity
- Excursions and outings
- Water safety
- Sun smart
- Child Safe Environment
- Child Safe and Wellbeing
- Relaxation and Sleep

Revision History

Date	Revision	Revised by
10/10/2013	Created	Tammy Rowed
24/08/2020	Updated	Leanne Lee-Ack
31/08/2020	Reviewed for consistency with <i>CCC Policy & Procedure Manual</i>	Catriona O'Neill
11/11/2024	Reviewed and updated	Leanne Lee-Ack
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